The Birmingham Eccentric

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THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 1936

NOTE: The Eccentric is pleased to publish stories of events which have news value and which are written by persons not connected with the editorial staff of the paper. All copy must be presented before noon on Wednesdays. The right is reserved, however, to make such superficial changes in the work submitted as are necessary to the style of the paper and as are required by laws of the state. Because of a mechanical situation in the composing room, headlines written by those other than members of the staff cannot be used. Any erroneous reflection upon the character, standing or reputation of any person, firm or corporation which may appear in the columns of The Eccentric will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the publisher.

Birmingham Resolves To Live More Economically

Willingness on the part of Birmingham's City Commission to operate with a maximum of economy from now on, so that the bonded indebtedness may be decreased, is an excellent gesture. Passed last Monday night, this "economy resolution" should provide local taxpayers with renewed faith in local government; at the same time, the resolution suggests to every city employee the need for greater efficiency and economy in the administration of Birmingham's municipal affairs.

Citizens, themselves, are in a position to assist in maintaining the lowest possible tax rate; they can do this by refraining from petitioning the Commission to grant them unnecessary additional municipal services—for every time the city extends its hand somebody has to pay for it, and this "pay" can come only from the taxpayers' pocketbooks.

We congratulate the City Commission, as well as other contributing and cooperative agencies, for the passage of the "economy resolution." It is to be hoped that it will serve, indefinitely, to remind everybody that, to refer in part directly to the resolution itself, "we, the members of the City Commission, individually and collectively declare and record our intention of consistently adhering to a policy of strict and wise economy in the administration of the affairs of the City, with the definite purpose and objective of retiring the indebtedness of the City in compliance with the terms of the refunding plan, or sooner if reasonably possible, and that this resolution be transmitted to all city employees and to all future members of this Commission."

Shame On Michigan!

"So Michigan will now invite all the shyster stock salesmen in the country to come in and swindle its people, eh?" a friend of ours recently said, when he read the announcement out of Lansing that Michigan no longer will operate to protect investors against unlicensed stock salesmen.

This comment was made because Mrs. Alice E. Alexander, chairman of the new State Corporation and Securities Commission said: "We are through operating a detective agency."

Thus, for the first time since 1913, the bars are down for the sale of all manner of stocks and bonds. "Let the buyer beware," say State officials.

What a joke, it seems, is so much of the alleged protection that a State gives its people.

If we were a Democratic publicist, we'd find plenty of ammunition in Mrs. Alexander's attitude toward the "blue sky laws." We'd make the old Republican party look foolish in more than one place.

Citizens of Michigan pay millions of dollars annually for police protection against all manner of personal and property injury; they support expensive law enforcing agencies, prosecutors, courts, sheriffs, and penal systems—yet Michigan now takes down the protection of an alert Securities Commission (which it never had very effectively, anyway) and makes prey of its defenseless investors "because we are through operating a detective agency."

Shame on Michigan. Shame on Mrs. Alexander. Shame on Governor Fitzgerald. Shame on Attorney-General Crowley. Shame on the people of Michigan for not protesting for greater protection from swindling stock salesmen.

Shame on the lack of official shame.

. . . and, well, just shame!

Domestic Prosperity

The idea that a nation, to be prosperous, must export much of its goods, is wrong, fundamentally. To believe so, is like declaring that an individual cannot live without constant exchange of his home-made goods with others. It is true that exports are desirable, but in the end (to maintain international economic balance) a nation is supposed to import an amount equal to its exports.

While we do not believe in economic isolation, we do suggest that our master minds in high places determine upon a system that—regardless of external conditions—can maintain domestic economic balance. Only by so doing can a nation enjoy the bounteous wealth that lies in and upon its portion of the whirling globe.

WHENEVER YOU CAN, why not make your purchases right here in Birmingham? Every time you spend a dollar "at home," you assist in improving the quality of merchandise available right at your door. Tell local merchants what you think about them; praise them for their virtues, constructively criticise their weaknesses. As their patrons, YOU CAN DO MUCH TO HELP THEM IN BUILDING UP BIRMINGHAM'S SHOPPING FACILITIES.

IF THE POLITICAL LEADERS of every country that declares war were required to get into the front line trenches themselves, the possibility of war would be lessened, oh, about a million per cent. Why not a Constitutional Amendment requiring all Congressmen under 70 years of age to join the infantry in time of war? Come on, Ladies, circulate the petitions!

Americans Spend More For "Wants" Than "Needs"

Americans spend more to maintain their self-respect and "to keep up with the Joneses," than they spend on keeping their bodies fed, Dr. Edward L. Thorndike, psychologist of Columbia University, recently said in his farewell address as president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Only about half the seventeen billion dollars spent annually on food in the United States goes to satisfy the fundamental urge of hunger. The rest goes to fulfill esthetic and emotional desires that have no direct relation to this basic urge. The same situation exists as to clothes, says Dr. Thorndike, for the eight billion dollars annually expended for this item, less than half buys real protection against the elements, while the remainder goes to make clothing more pleasing to the eye of the wearer and of others.

By making such analyses of the items for which money is actually spent by the people of America, Dr. Thorndike believes that psychologists can gain a practical knowledge of the demands of modern human beings.

Less than one-third of the national income was spent for wants which must be satisfied to keep Americans alive and self-perpetuating, he found. The rest went chiefly to keep us amused and comfortable physically, intellectually, morally, and especially socially.

The intellectual budget is a relatively small part of the two-thirds of our total expenditures which go for intangibles. Relatively little is paid for the satisfaction of intellectual life.

A Single Standard

As I have increased in years and in opportunity to study the affairs of governments, I have made a very simple but vital observation. That is that a government should have in financial matters the same standard that an honorable man has. A government must realize that money must be earned before it is spent, that a nation's word in finance should be sacredly kept, that a nation is immoral if it repudiates its obligations or inflates its medium of exchange or borrows without regard of posterity; and, finally a nation which violates these simple principles will, like a man, end in dishonor and disaster. A government cannot expect financial honor unless it maintains honor itself. A large part of the world's misery in all ages has come from the acts of government that ignored these principles and entered upon politics of reckless spending and debasement and repudiation.—Hon. Herbert Hoover.

On The Hellfare

In his autograph, Lincoln Steffens tells how he tried to explain to Judge Gary, of the United States Steel Corporation, why workers do not always appreciate welfare work and why they sometimes call it hellfare work.

Steffens contended that the workers prefer to get all that is coming to them in cash so that they may indulge their own preferences and follies.

To make the point clear, Steffens asked for the privilege of living in Judge Gary's apartment in the Waldorf, with freedom to do as he liked, the next time the Judge left for a vacation. Steffens knew that the apartment contained many works of art and was expensively furnished.

"What will you do?" asked Judge Gary, puzzled.

Steffens said he would throw out the furniture, and put in furniture to his own taste. He would do over the walls and floors, and discard the famous paintings, substituting newer things that pleased him.

"When you return, you will be amazed at the change," exclaimed Steffens. "It will be costly, of course, because it will be your money that I spend. But I will be doing it for your own good, and I will do the job better than you could possibly do it."

Judge Gary halted him. "I get you," he said "That's it, is it?"

"Yes," said Steffens, "that's welfare work."

—Lapeer County Press.

Long Live Service Clubs!

Birmingham has three service clubs within it, Lions, Exchange, and Rotary. Each of these clubs does something for human beings that society, officially, does not take care of altogether. For instance, Lions spends money every year for vision, helping those unable to pay for optical treatment; Exchange does much for teeth, by maintaining a free dental clinic in the Barnum school for those who can't as yet afford to pay; and Rotary, long pioneers in crippled children's work, does much to help worthy cases of this type. Long live service clubs!

"Putting Across" A Candidate

"Putting across" a candidate for political office involves a certain very definite technique of advertising and propaganda. Loose and careless handling of the truth has always been an accepted method in American political maneuvering. Your professional politician knows that the average voter knows very little about candidates and issues; therefore he can build his campaign as loosely as expediency and his conscience allow. The coming Presidential campaign will be a very intense one; both sides will sling plenty of mud—and the fog of mere personality will often obscure the real issues. Alas! modern politics is but an up-to-date method of the original snake-oil sideshow ballyhoist; and, one may ask: "why not?"—for, as Barnum once said: "There's a sucker born every minute."

"The Hilltop Of Peace"

While the League of Nations did not prevent Japan from taking a slice of China, of Italy grabbing off portions of Ethiopia, yet it has been a valuable institution in our world today. It points the way to a hilltop that, someday, the great nations of the earth may reach: the hilltop of Peace. For, please remember, once there was no League of Nations, not even an organized international hope for world peace; while we, personally, trust that the United States will remain outside the League of Nations until Europe and Asia manifest more peaceful inclinations, yet we are thankful that an American ideal known as the League of Nations was given to the whole world by Woodrow Wilson. Let's not laugh and scoff at the League of Nations, powerless though it may be today to maintain peace. Do we not all want peace?

SCIENTISTS HOPE, some day, to produce synthetic men. We suggest that they accept the assistance already manifested by politics in the production of certain members of Congress.

People's Column

The Eccentric is pleased to receive communications for this column. All communications must be signed, but signatures will be kept confidential upon request. Letters must be limited to 350 words, and must be in the office by Tuesday noon for publication the following Thursday.

Dr. George H. Derry,
Pres., Marygrove College,
Detroit, Michigan

Dear Sir:

Regarding your address on, "The Mystery of Money," delivered Tuesday night at the Forum: Incited by the bitterness against the bankers which you stirred up, accusing them of robbing the people, the gentleman in the seat behind me asked this question:

"Would not doing away with interest to the bankers be like taking the machine gun away from a Dillinger?" Considering your accusations, that question was a reasonable one.

The lateness of the hour forbade questions I wished to ask, so I trust you will pardon my asking them through The Eccentric. There are many others who would like to read your answer to these.

You advocated Printing Press money, but, in reply to a question, you said gold would be used for foreign exchange.

(a) How would a person obtain gold for foreign shipment?

(b) Would the money you propose be received in payment of taxes? If so, would not the cost of tax collection be greater than the cost of printing? And why any taxes at all if the Government could print the money cheaper?

(c) What would happen to the Federal Reserve which you said is unconstitutional?

(d) What would happen to the gold held in trust by the U. S. Treasury but belonging to the Federal Reserve and to other holders of the gold certificates? It amounts to $7,792,231,490.61 (statement April 23.)

(e) If a person's security is not good enough for a bank loan today, what would make it good enough under your plan?

(f) If the security would be no more acceptable for the kind of money than under the present, how would your money scheme be any better than the present one?

(g) How would the man without money or security, to whom your plan appeals most strongly, be able to get any of that money, unless he did something for the Government or in selling them something?

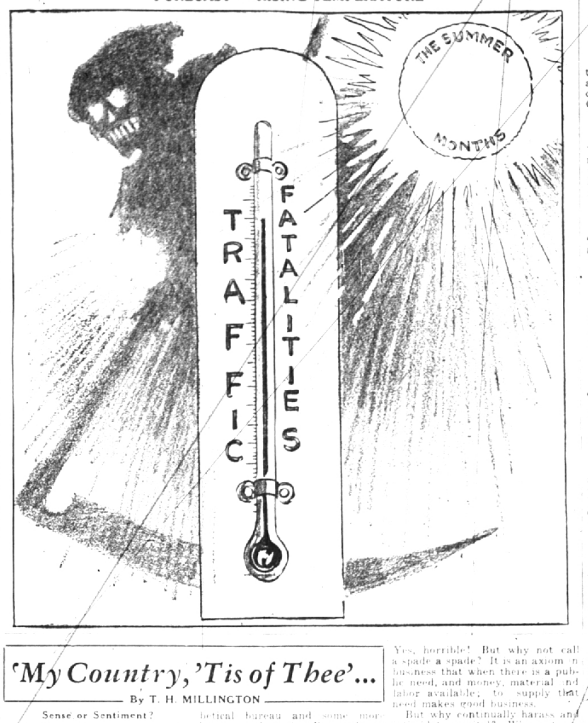
Trusting you will be kind enough to answer these categorically through The Eccentric May 7th, and other questions which may arise, I am,

Yours respectfully,
Theodore H. Millington,
248 Park Street.

Teacher—Can anyone tell me how the earth is kept in its place?

Willie—Between them that's got it and them that would like to have it.

FORECAST — RISING TEMPERATURE



'My Country, 'Tis of Thee'...

By T. H. MILLINGTON

Sense or Sentiment?

President Roosevelt wants industry to take up the slack in unemployment. The public is informed that the President's depression panacea have employed from 2 to 3 million people so far; but that there still are twelve million "forgotten" men, or, as Father Sonberg of Detroit University states, twenty four million unemployed. The exact number evidently depends upon the kind of sliding-scale-hind-sight emotions to be aroused. The President also insists upon a higher scale of wages.

T. H. MILLINGTON

But industry says it is employing nearly all of the 2 to 3 million and are paying the 25-29 Whichever side is right or wrong may require another alphabetical bureau and some morgues of deserving Roosevelt-ians to determine, or further hoing. But in the meantime we have a peculiar phenomenon before us.

Anti-relief critics shout that there are needed new homes for over two million families, and one's own eyes see that millions and maybe billions of dollars can be spent in reconditioning. And billions of idle dollars lie in the banks.

Now it seems to me that if I am hungry and there is food in the pantry and gas for the stove there is no excuse for starving. Of course, I may be ill and cannot eat —just as some people say the American people are ill and need to be cured before proceeding to take nourishment. Yet, if the experts disagree, as they do in the case of the American people, the patient may decide he is cured.

Capitalism vs. Idealism

But why cannot capital, the employed and the neglected homebuilding get together? If statistics don't lie, it would take fifteen to twenty million people to catch up on house building alone.

Perhaps the answer lies in the difference of philosophies held, on the one side by capital, and on the other by the social-worker-idealists recently elevated to government command.

The income of capital with which to meet the payroll is limited by the price and quantity of sales.

The income of the politico-social worker is limited only by the amount of public emotion he can fanatical appeal can arouse, and the resultant public support.

In neither case does the money to carry out the objectives come from the political-social agitator. It comes through taxes or capital, which in turn receives it from an increased cost of living for the average man.

In other words, industry is obliged to take orders from the politico-social worker or stand the tax to pay the cost of feeding the idle and the government business anyway.

The great and little employers of men, the men of judgment and experience in continuously meeting the payroll of the nation, have been shoved aside. Yet, continuously to know how to meet the payroll is the foundation of successful business, and the alpha and omega of economics.

Twenty four years ago, when sentiment began to be substituted for sense in government, our Federal debt was slightly **under one** billion dollars. Today it is **over thirty six** billion dollars. But during the same period there were nine years when the old-fashioned horse-and-buggy philosophy that debts should be paid held sway. During that old-fashioned period **nine billions** were paid off, but to no permanent effect. During the last three years **sentiment has actually replaced sense**, and all that reduction of debt has been followed by still greater debts, until today the nation is faced with these alternatives: Repudiation, resulting in national chaos and world disgrace, or, reduction of income and reduction of standard of living, housing and education, but a determination to pay.

Debts can only be paid out of income, and income can only come out of work. Taxing one group to pay another makes both poor. It is like taking food away from one to give to another and making both hungry.

Put Sense in Command

During all this discussion and argument the unemployed are still unemployed—cattle in the economic slaughter-house.

Horrible illustration, you say? Yes, horrible! But why not call a spade a spade? It is an axiom in business that when there is a public need, and money, material and labor available, to supply that need makes good business.

But why continually harass and intimidate capital? Why not encourage private capital to supply the need for homes and so furnish that much needed employment and income to pay for our sentimental debauch? Why not put sense in supreme command?

India-dialism in the people and not the Government made this glorious country.

At present our government is squanderment, and **government tradices while capital produces.**

Read "Credo," by Rose Wilder Lane, in "Reader's Digest" for May, reprint from "Saturday Evening Post." Thank God for her vision of America, and adopt her faith in American Individualism.

WASHINGTON LETTER

Show du Ponts Most Heavenly of All Anti-New Deal 'Angels'

BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON—Recent hearings before the Senate Lobby Committee have revealed that the Roosevelt administration has no opponents more active and free-spending than the famous du Pont family of Delaware.

The committee found that members of the family have contributed a total of $188,000 to a long list of anti-New Deal organizations. Their nearest rivals in such donations appear to be the Philadelphia Pitcairns, reported to have bolstered the Sentinels of the Republic treasury by $102,550.

The du Pont $188,050 does not include gifts to the same organizations by officers of their numerous companies. Senator Lewis B. Schwellenbach (Dem., Wash.) asserted in a recent radio address that the Liberty League alone had received $270,000 in gifts and loans from the du Ponts and their business and personal associates. Seven du Ponts supplied $154,250 of this and observers at the Liberty League banquet counted at least 12 of the family enthusiastically applauding Al Smith's anti-New Deal blasts.

• • •

IN addition to the Liberty League contributions, Irenee and Lammot du Pont gave $15,000 to The Crusaders, a Chicago organization originally formed to fight prohibition. The lobby committee found that since 1934 The Crusaders have collected $160,000 to finance a series of anti-New Deal broadcasts, in which the public utility holding company bill, the banking bill, the AAA amendments, the TVA, and the tax policies of the administration were attacked.

Other large givers to The Crusaders were shown to be officers of various power companies, though this fact was not revealed to radio listeners.

Lammot du Pont was also a large contributor to the Farmers' Independence Council, formed by Stanley Morse of Chicago to oppose the AAA among farmers.

Morse was previously an "agricultural expert" for the Liberty League, and his council used the league offices both in Washington and Chicago. Headed by Dan Casement, wealthy Kansas wheat farmer and AAA opponent, the organization had few farmer members.

The Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution, sponsored by John Henry Kirby of tariff lobby fame, got $5000 from Pierre S. du Pont and $5000 from John J. Raskob to stage the Talmadge grass roots convention in Macon, Ga., at which pictures of Mrs. Roosevelt and the president accompanied by Negroes were distributed. The Southern Committee was shown to have received gifts from many northern industrialists to finance its activities.

• • •

ANOTHER recipient of du Pont money was the Economists' National Committee on Monetary Policy, which finances broadcasts by conservative economists, such as E. W. Kemmerer of Princeton, and Neil Carothers of Lehigh University, attacking the administration's fiscal policies and describing the dangers of inflation.

Others were the Women Investors of America, active last year against the holding company bill, the Minute Men and Women of Today; and the Sentinels of the Republic, primarily opposed to the child labor amendment, but active also against the social security act, the Guffey coal act, and income tax publicity.

The animosity of the du Ponts, who supported the Democratic party in 1932, may be due in part to activity of the munitions investigating committee last year. The committee alleged the company had made total war profits of $265,000,000, had paid South American and Chinese officials to buy its explosives, and, through sales arrangements with English Imperial Chemical Industries, had evaded provisions of the president's 1934 proclamation forbidding sale of munitions to Bolivia and Paraguay in the Chaco War.

Jots 'n Jest

WHEN a man has the last word in an argument with his wife, it's usually "Yes, dear."

• • •

"In spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love," except during leap year, when his mind is too filled with thoughts of self-defense.

• • •

Walter Johnson may have proved that a dollar will go just as far today as in George Washington's day, but everybody can't be a star pitcher.

• • •

Well, there's some hope for Junior, now that the University of Chicago has set the precedent of conferring the honorary degree of master of football arts.

• • •

If only politicians' statements were more candid and less candied.

Big-Hearted

Mrs. Multikids—I never punch my children. It's decidedly against my principles.

Mrs. Morekids—I wonder how you can expect to manage them.

Mrs. Multikids—I tell my husband when they misbehave, an' he larrups them.

PARAGRAPHS

He Does

Tests show that a person has the most native intelligence at the age of 17. After that, he goes to college.—The San Francisco Chronicle.

It's So

It has been decided that the "flu" is both affirmative and negative. Sometimes the ayes have it and sometimes the nose.—Mokuleie, U. S. Fleet Base, Pearl Harbor, T. H.

One Consolation

It develops that the oldest war on which our government is still giving pensions is that of 1812. Hurrah! The Revolution is paid for.—Atlanta Constitution.

You Can't

Chicago Woman, suing for divorce, charges her husband liked the radio better than he did her. Well, you can't dial out a wife.—Buffalo Times.

Or Naive

A New York judge was so pleased by the book reviews of a juvenile delinquent, that Jad was released. Maybe he omitted the word "provocative."—Detroit News.

Not Perfect

Sweden reports a perpetual-motion clock that has run without winding since November, 1916. It keeps time but it will not put the cat out at night.—Minneapolis Journal.

Definitions

A gossip is one who talks to you about others; a bore is one who talks to you about himself, and a brilliant conversationalist is one who talks to you about yourself.—Galt (Ont.) Reporter.

A Discovery

Washington has suddenly discovered that the Vice-President has never had a special flag. If this curiosity persists unchecked somebody will discover the Vice President.—New York Sun.

Uncivilized

A savage is a person who has no debts, deficits or poison gas.—Miami Herald.

Ain't It So?

It isn't a will power that a girl needs nowadays. It's won't power.—U. S. S. Pennsylvania Keystone.

Or Hot Air?

"Full steam ahead' is the slogan of campaign leaders." So that's what it was, steam.—Rochester Times-Union.

True

The harder some folks work, the harder others have to work to correct their mistakes.—Rochester Times-Union.

W-w-well! Well!

Ken Cotton, big California fullback, is a stutterer. He stutters, however, only when he talks.—New York Herald Tribune.

Definition

Foresight—That which causes a man to buy the kind of things when he is flush that he can pawn when he is broke.—Lucifer's Lexicon.

A Wonder

The Minority think that a man who will constantly deceive his wife is contemptible—most of us think he's a wonder.—U. S. S. Saratoga Plane Talk.

Just Guess

"Miss Russell of 1936 is painting her face." Guess the color—Toledo Blade.

BOOK FOLKS

The people that I know and love—
my friends
I do not really know at all, for
they
Conceal their inmost thoughts and
trends;
But I grow well acquainted
With people who are painted
In vivid hues and tones in books;
Whether they dwell in quiet nooks,
Or venture forth to dare and do—
They are the people who
I really know, for they reveal
Exactly what they think and feel.
—Beatrice McDonald

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